

(7)
*To, The Governor and Deputy Governor;
 The Worshipful, The Mayor, The Justices,
 And to every other Member of the Corporation of the Poor of the City
 and County of Exon.*

S I R S,

EXETER, Dec. 24, 1781.

I WAS influenced by Duty to begin, and now much disposed to continue, the Work:—in return for the Honour of your very polite and public Acknowledgement of the Services I have been able to render to you, and to the rest of my Fellow-Citizens; and in hope of attaining to the Proportion of Acquirement, you should wish from me respecting the Corporative Business.

The late Productions have been much favoured by the Evidence of Faith on the Report and Actions of others; which, might have had the visible Testimony of real Existence.—If the SUMMARY OF ACCOMPTS, had been begun in April and not left to December following.—A Period when the Articles, enumerated in the *Inventory*, could have had personal Examination.—A Fact that might have proved *no* more; yet that, (it must be owned,) would have more firmly, authenticated the same.

There ought, (in my humble Opinion,) for the SATISFACTION of those, who must contribute a *Share* to such a vast Annual Expence:—That some Person, *officially* and candidly, do undertake the *laborious Task* of minutely investigating every Cause of Controversy and every Species of cognizable Conduct, in the Workhouse;—from the House-keeper, through the Manufactory, to the Meanest therein:—In order to discover and declare; Whether the Woollen Manufactory is the (*almost*) only Employment for the Poor:—And Whether the Expences of maintaining the Poor therein, is more or less, for the Interest *general*, than to maintain them out;—And according to the Result from the *Minute Enquiry*, to fix a future Government thereon: And I beg Leave to Observe, that, A general State of NEAT-PRODUCE, from the Workhouse;—without ascertaining Numbers:—And the specific Expences on *these* Numbers, is—inadequate to what—may be expected.—Hence also may be abduced—(particularly) how; And for what *beneficial* Services: The Housekeeper has been, and is to be intitled to so considerable a Reward as the $\frac{1}{2}$ by Labour, Profit &c.—If, on, and after, a Candid Scrutiny general and particular; not omitting a due Attention of Sympathy; and of proper Treatment to the Poor:—There Appear Testimony in his favour, (which is now believed,) His Character will be established in Purity, like the fine Gold, after the Process of Refinement;—But this is a Task,—Sirs—without the Limits—or—*Practicability* of a TREASURER, with the other Appendages of Office. Such an *Imposition* would be too grievous for *any one*,—who must neglect his own Concerns;—*moreover*,—Incidents many—Pro & Con—are not (at first) discernable in a Woollen Manufactory; Unless by a Person trained in the Midst of Experience thereto.—To this Task—should be added—If time and opportunity permit,—on All Occasions,—to enter into A Ledger;—a Record of Facts &c. likely to be useful in any future time.—A compleat RENTAL by Admeasurement and Maps:—Extracts of Leases;—A Summary of BYE LAWS now scattered in many Books—to be for the ready And more easy dispatch of Business by the Court or by the Committee at All times;—Giving an Index to the Statutes;—and to be aiding And Assisting to *reduce* into Order;—*Whatever*, may contribute to the Economy of Time—and of Other Expences &c.—A Task, unless, *Voluntarily* undertaken, as has been before remarked,—would be Grievous:—But, without being further prolix,—I herewith make a tender of my *best* endeavours (—Conditionally—) to discharge these duties And Services—And for Which, the Statute 9. & 10 Wm. 3. had (—If I think right—) such an Officer in future View: And of which, Page 30th of the said Statute being read, will be very explanatory:—And Experience has taught how beneficial It *might* have been.

My reason, for this tender of Services, is,—That I am the Only Member of the Corporation *trained* to the Whole process of the Woollen Manufactory,—That I have now no Family:—And I am now (willingly) at leisure to commence January 1st, 1782, for a Year certain.—That I may strive to compleat the Task begun in 1774, further to arrange Accompts, and assist, as then, so for the Year to come,—to bear the PROPORTION of Service as *early* as, could be, being from that time, a Member, a Gentleman Commoner, of the University of Oxford:—I might not be *summonable* to this, or to any other secular Office.—And since the late Publication of Accompt:—That the same *Premises* (which, gave that Existence,) *should* be retained in Mind, to forward and promote the remaining Part of the System.—And, *Left*, The Corporative Body should relapse into the remiss Conduct of passing the TREASURER'S ACCOMPTS on loose Papers,—hazarded to the Wind, or to Any Other fluctuating Influence:—Leaving a New Treasurer no Experience on Record of Disbursements, nor of Revenues,—easy for Reference.

The first printed Accompt was from Mr. Wilmot; For in the Act of Parliament 31 Geo. 2, (1758) Treasurers Accompts were ordered to be published and printed;—but ignorantly penned—no penalty being annexed for the non-performance.—In 1774, a Statute directs a Penalty—but from 1697 to 1780, not one, of these Accompts, was entered by the CORPORATION—into any Volume for public Use or reference.

The CONDITION, whereon this arduous Task is offered,—is produced on the Idea of Christian Equity:—The Proportion of Service;—and the legal Permission of the Statutes to the Case in point;—Members being only ELIGIBLE to the Office of TREASURER,—NOT *positively* in Rotation:—for did the Statute limit in Rotation,—The JUSTICES, heretofore, ELIGIBLE, could not have been excused on their having done—and to do a Proportion of—Duty, respecting the Body Corporate *whereof* they were and are Members:—Nor might you grant an Excuse, were the Office absolute.—But herein, AN EXCHANGE of Office,—an exemption, is *only asked* on a valuable consideration; For the Execution of What you may deem the rotative Office, has been freely offered me, Gratis:—but the Favour cannot be accepted;—ON THE RESOLUTION of endeavouring more Essential Service to the Corporation;—to the Public,—And to succeeding Treasurers; by taking the Office of, COMPTROLLER OF ACCOMPTS, as is intimated in the fore said 30th Page.—To make the TREASURERSHIP easy to be practiced on a REGULATED PLAN; *which is Now Wanting*.—If it were possible and becoming me to execute the *Whole* without Assistance,—I would;—for I had intended to take my Caution Money—Name, &c. &c. from the University—for the Time: But Now the Ultimate is to be:—If you, Gentlemen, think the Specimens of Service, Which, I have given,—with the Acquaintance you may have Obtained of my Unweariness on the Subjects and Concerns I Undertake:—as the ADJUSTMENT of the Accompts, of all the Charities, (Witnesseth,) that another incorporated Society—(W, F, and S.) are Guardians of, from the Year 1642, through a Series of 139 Years.—I say,—If these are evidences in favour of the *future* proposed performances, to be desired;—You'll be pleased legally to appoint me, COMPTROLLER OF ACCOMPTS, &c. as empowered by the before cited Statute, 9 and 10 Wm. 3. and also by 14 Geo. 3.—(1774)—Page 57:—Obliging yourselves in the Penal Sum of Forty Pounds; that my Services past and to come in the ensuing Year; are and shall be deemed compensate with and in Lieu of the Office of Treasurer, &c. Now And Ever.—To this, I should scorn a Claim, If I did not flatter myself of rendering *double* Service.—However—I must not be overloaded.—But, If, on the Contrary—you misconceive my Proposition;—I may Claim my Priviledge—or pay the fine:—If you can and will demand it:—Which will free me from the minutest Obligation.

There remains, for the present only to add—That as the Housekeeper cannot be deemed infallible,—consequently the joint Assistance of Advice;—to Services,—and towards the best and easiest Method of Accompts:—must be desirable to him—and to every future Treasurer, for the Satisfaction of themselves and to All Others, to whom accountable: I engage my Honour to use my Efforts for the Good of the Whole:—And beg Leave to say, to the junior Members, that I have Hope of rendering to them, Services more than a Balance—to the CHANGE of Office.—THO; the Treasurer-ship be not stayed A Year, by Me, from devolving, towards them.—I have recommended to Mr. Brutton, A New Inventory to be taken at the Expiration of the Year 1781.—for without which,—The *Certainty* cannot be demonstrated in the Next Treasurer's Accompt to be exhibited:—But as to All Other public Concerns, I purpose to be inactive, Until I learn your Determination.—In the mean-while you'll be pleased to read (also) the Bottom Part of Page 15th, In the Act of Wm. 3. which gives—“Power and Authority—from Time to Time—to make and Appoint a Common Seal—or Seals—and to make and ordain—Bye Laws—Rules—and Ordinances for the, BETTER, governing of the Corporation; And the Poor of the said City.” &c. *Seeing*, The Office of Treasurer is *only* ELIGIBLE, And the Offer herewith made—being for the, BETTER, governing &c. The just Decision must be plain and easy to you.

I am, Your Very Humble Servant,

WM. HOLMES.

P. S. If the wanted Regulation be not made—by ESPECIAL Appointment—
 —It must remain—UNCERTAIN—as in Times past.—